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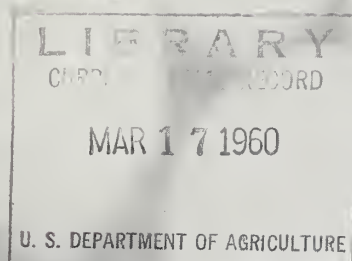
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MARCH 1960

Agricultural marketing

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MARCH IS EGG MONTH

Contents

March 1960

Promoting Retail Hamburger Sales	3
Packing Jams and Jellies Under USDA Inspection	4
An Efficient Grocery Warehouse Layout	5
Livestock Terminal Markets	6
From Chick to Broiler—In Georgia	8
Market News for Livestock Marketings	12
Promotion of Farm Products by Agricultural Groups	13
Visual Aids Help in Grading Fruits and Vegetables	14
Special Milk Program	16
March Is Egg Month	16

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Editor, Milton Hoffman

Associate editor, Jeanne Starr Park

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Promoting Retail Hamburger Sales

by Hugh M. Smith

WHAT can be done to sell more hamburger?

A recent AMS study—part of a larger merchandising research project conducted in 12 Eastern supermarkets — shows that advertising plus price reductions help boost ground beef sales.

A simple statement — “Fresh ground beef, quality guaranteed, 2 pounds, 79 cents”—in a Thursday advertisement resulted in 17 percent more sales of this grade hamburger. Total sales of all grades increased 9 percent.

The “2 pounds for 79 cents” offer was 11 cents below the regular price of this grade beef. One-pound packages remained at 45 cents. Medium-grade beef sold for 69 cents a pound and ground round for 89 cents.

No point-of-sale material or special displays were used for any of the items.

Limited in-store promotions, such as price signs, apparently did little to increase the sale of hamburger at regular prices. Market analysts placed a 7 x 11 inch sign which read “Really fresh ground beef, 45 cents a pound, satisfaction guaran-

teed” behind a retail display. Sales rose only 3 percent, and there were so many other factors that might have made this difference that in-store promotion could not rightfully be credited with the sales increase.

AMS researchers also found that there is no real advantage in separating hamburger by grade in the display case. That is, sales were just as great when all three grades were displayed side-by-side as when the ground round steak was placed next to the round steak and the two other grades elsewhere in the meat case.

A lot more hamburger, however, is sold during the last three days of the week than the first three. Because of this, retail display space in the test stores was increased 17 percent on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Sales rose 190 percent!

Each of the stores sold an average of 940 pounds of hamburger a week. Per 100 customers, sales averaged 13.4 pounds the first of the week, 22.5 pounds the last three days.

Research studies such as this provide retailers with valuable merchandising information which, when put to use, improves and expands the marketing of farm-produced foods.

The author is an agricultural economist in the Market Development Research Division of AMS.

**FRESH
GROUND BEEF
quality
guaranteed
2 lbs. - 79¢**



Sample of the product is examined by USDA inspector with the aid of a refractometer. The inspector's reports help plant managers to meet the standards set for quality and content. Minimum amounts of soluble solids in jellies and jams are established by the Food and Drug Administration.

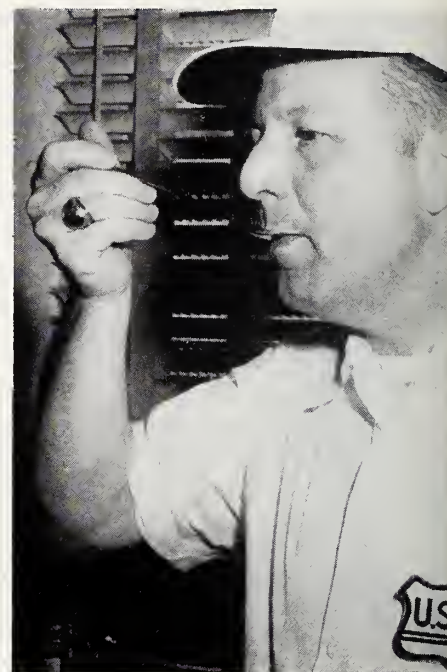


Under USDA Continuous Inspection Program, an inspector is on duty at all times when plant is in operation. He observes every step of processing and packing, checks on plant sanitation, and makes periodic checks on quality at each stage of manufacture.

Packing Jams and Jellies under USDA's . . . **CONTINUOUS INSPECTION**



The inspector uses a "spreadometer" as a guide in determining consistency. When the cylinder is lifted off, he measures how much the product has spread in given amount of time. USDA inspector issues certificates indicating quality-grade of each lot. Buyers who request certificates can be certain of exactly what they are getting. Quality is judged by USDA grades or other specifications.



"Aaah!" Inspector makes final and most enjoyable test of quality. Taste-testing the jams and jellies is part of his job. Inspector's experience is important especially in detecting flavor variations.



Warehouse storage areas and docks should have from 25 to 35 foot candles of light. In areas where the weather is severe, it's a good idea to have motortruck ramps and rail car siding enclosed in warehouse.

An Efficient Grocery Warehouse Layout

by John C. Bouma and Arnold L. Lundquist

IS YOUR grocery warehouse designed for efficient, economical operation?

It can be—if you follow the suggestions outlined by the Agricultural Marketing Service.

AMS researchers are constantly seeking ways to improve our marketing system and thereby reduce the cost of moving farm food products to the consumer. Part of this research recently dealt with grocery warehouses.

Tips on layout, equipment, and methods for various types of warehouse operations are presented in MRR-348, "Grocery Warehouse Layout and Equipment for Maximum Productivity." The publication can be obtained from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.

According to the report, a grocery warehouse should be designed to afford the lowest operating costs with due consideration given to construction costs.

Remember. Square buildings are less costly to build than oblong

ones, because they require less wall space in proportion to the size of the storage.

Also, it is wise to avoid odd shaped buildings. These are difficult to organize for efficient use of labor and materials-handling equipment.

And while you're designing your building, think about its future and yours. Will it lend itself to future expansion?

Next, take a look at the inside layout. A warehouse without support columns affords the most efficient operation. But this type of building is costly—too costly to justify its use.

So try the next best thing. Space the columns so they least interfere with storage space and materials handling.

AMS researchers suggest placing columns 40 feet apart. This allows an aisle width of either 6½ or 10 feet. It also provides a bay space of 40 by 40 feet—suitable for pallets with a 32-inch face and 40-inch depth.

An ideal warehouse has 20 feet of clear stacking height. Top pallets

are serviced by forklift trucks with a 200-inch reach. Merchandise is stored in fixed slots to reduce the likelihood of errors in billing and order assembly.

The short selection line is most efficient for the assembly of small orders in warehouses of more than 100,000 square feet. Large retail orders, however, are better handled on a long selection line with mechanical tow tractors.

In assembling orders larger than 700 cases, tests show that order selection and equipment cost an average of 0.93 cent per case on a long selection line compared with 1.08 cents per case on a short line.

Be sure to match handling equipment to your layout.

For example, to economically use order selector tow tractors, a warehouse must be more than 50,000 square feet. If you have this size layout, by all means use tow tractors. Then, for added economy, make them radio-controlled. Automatic tractors can speed up order filler production 13 percent.

In warehouses larger than 125,000 square feet, a perimeter topline is the best way to haul orders to the shipping dock. Researchers estimate this equipment saves the cost of 1 man in the shipping department of a large warehouse.

Handling equipment also has to be matched to aisle sizes. For a 6½-foot aisle, a straddle-type forklift truck works best. But, a counter-balanced forklift is more efficient in a 10-foot aisle.

For handling ease, docks should be approximately the same height as the floor of rail cars and trucks. Canopies are recommended for over the loading ramps and, in areas where the weather is severe, motortruck ramps and rail car sidings should be enclosed within the warehouse.

It also is good practice to store merchandise, normally received by rail, on the side of the warehouse nearest the rail dock. Pallet racks and the repack room should be located near truck docks.

The authors are marketing specialists in the Transportation and Facilities Research Division of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Last year, terminal markets located across the United States handled 70 million head of cattle, calves, sheep, and hogs.



Livestock TERMINAL MARKETS

THE TERMINAL MARKET has, for over half a century, been one of the most important livestock market outlets in the United States. Last year, terminals received, handled, and sold more than 70 million head of livestock.

These animals went through terminal markets in many parts of the country—at South St. Paul, Fort Worth, Denver, Chicago, Ogden, and 59 other locations. In all instances, they were sold under the provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act. This Federal law is enforced by the Packers and Stockyards Branch of the Agricultural Marketing Service and assures buyers of fair business practices at livestock markets.

AMS also has market news reporters at most of the terminal markets. These men, operating out of the livestock market news offices throughout the country, collect and report on livestock prices, supplies, movement, and demand.



An AMS market news reporter discusses cattle prices with two buyers in the stockyards. Terminals handled 19 million head of cattle last year.



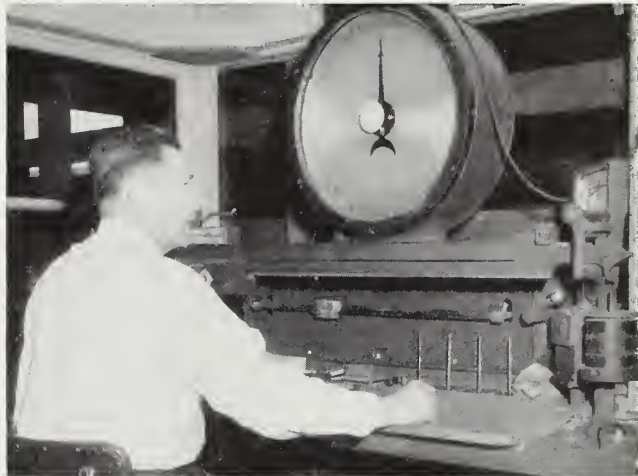
Livestock arrives at terminal markets by truck and rail. Here, feeder cattle from North Dakota are received and inspected at eastern market.



Thirty-five million hogs moved through terminals last year. Here, AMS reporter discusses day's selling prices with a packing company buyer.



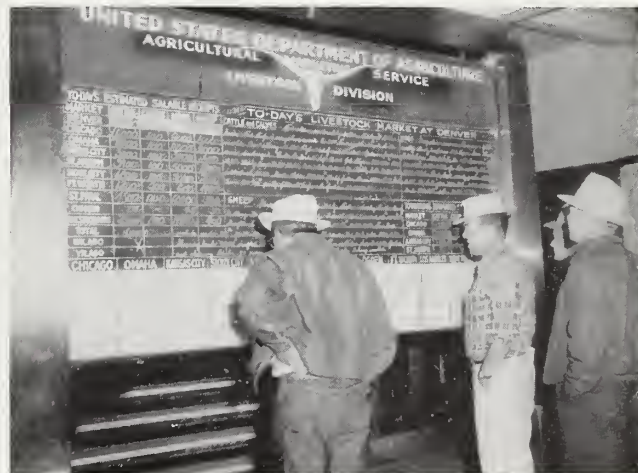
AMS market news man grades lamb picked from group at stackyards. Later he will compare his grading with actual carcass grade of same animal.



All terminal markets are posted under the Packers and Stackyards Act. To safeguard against unfair practices, P & S man checks market scales.



Scale ticket goes into slot to be stamped with the weight of cattle on the scales. This ticket also is checked by P & S marketing specialist.



Bulletin boards, reporting day's market activities, are maintained at the livestock terminal markets by livestock market news service of AMS.

From CHICK to BROILER

in Georgia

*Improved production and marketing
facilities have worked together
to make Georgia the Nation's
leading broiler-producing State.*

by Art Susott

A TOURIST from the Midwest—so the story goes—while en route to Florida stopped in north Georgia for some “firsthand observing” of the State’s broiler industry. At a large broiler farm, an obliging caretaker showed him around.

Impressed with the size of the operation, the Midwesterner asked how long it took to grow a chick to 3½ pounds. About 9 weeks, he was told.

The visitor then asked about the growing time 15 years ago. In those days, the caretaker explained, birds generally were grown to 3 pounds. This required 12 to 14 weeks—or 3 to 5 weeks longer than now.

The tourist paused a few seconds to mull this over. Then he commented: “I’ll say this for you Georgia folks—you’ve sure shrunk the frying chicken’s life span.”

Actually, the natural life span of a broiler these days is neither longer nor shorter than it was a few years ago. But the tourist had put his finger on one of the significant achievements of the broiler industry—that of reducing the time it takes to grow a broiler chick into a market-size bird.

Mr. Susott is chief of the Southeast Marketing Information Division, Agricultural Marketing Service. He is stationed at Atlanta, Ga.

Had the visitor from the Midwest taken the time to tour other segments of the Georgia broiler industry, he would have discovered a wide variety of other accomplishments. He also would have been struck by the scope of the operation.

Gainesville, Ga., for example, boasts one of the largest and most modern processing plants in the country. This plant has an 800-foot straight production line area where workers kill, eviscerate, and pack 100 chickens a minute, 6,000 an hour, or 50,000 a day.

This particular plant produces fresh and frozen ready-to-cook chickens and precooked chicken products. Unlike most other Georgia processing plants, much of its output is frozen. Precut parts, packed in consumer-size cartons, are quick frozen in a large blast-freezing department which operates at minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit. To prepare precooked chicken, the company has equipment capable of cooking 5,000 pounds at a time.

A distribution division handles warehousing, shipping, and inventory control. A zero storage warehouse has more than 2 million pounds of storage space, and loading and unloading is speedily handled on pallets.

The company owns and operates 15 tractors and semitrailers and in addition uses the facilities of four commercial truck lines to speed its products to market. Its own fleet covers 34 States coast to coast, with each vehicle averaging about 100,000 miles a year.

A steady supply of broilers is furnished the processing company by an integrated system of broiler production. This begins with the broiler flocks. Layers, bred for producing meat-type chickens, provide eggs for the company’s hatchery. Newly hatched chicks are delivered within 24 hours to broiler farms where they are raised to market size.

Most of the growers who supply this particular company are “lease contract growers.” They are required to use scientifically prepared feed to insure the rapid, healthy growth of the chicks. A corps of field inspectors, under the direction of the company veterinarian, constantly watches the growing flocks.

Broiler flocks in Georgia generally consist of 3,000 or more birds. In recent years, there has been a definite trend toward larger “production units.” Near Silver City, one farm has three production units, each capable of raising 33,000 birds to broiler size in 9 weeks.





Aerial view of large poultry-breeding farm near Duluth, Ga., which specializes in supplying breeding cockerels for broiler industry. Eleven solar-type houses (upper left) accommodate 350 single pens.

Each unit has three modern broiler houses (31 feet wide and 308 feet long) equipped with all the latest labor-saving devices. All work connected with the flocks in a single production unit is handled by a caretaker and his wife, who live on the farm.

At Duluth, Ga., is one of the Nation's largest poultry-breeding farms. This farm reportedly produces the sires for about 75 percent of all the broilers grown in this country. The owner formerly had his main operations in California, but in 1954 moved them to Georgia.

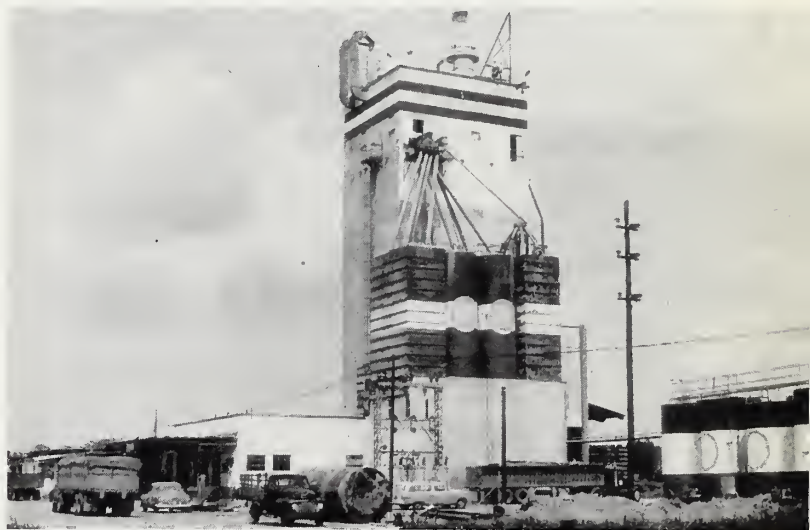
"Georgia was my largest customer for breeding cockerels while I was in California," he explained. "So, I thought it best to relocate here."

His Georgia breeding farm features a vast layout of immaculately kept laying houses, pullet-rearing houses, and some 350 individual pedigree single sire pens that are housed in 11 solar-type houses.

Behind the scenes, the owner maintains an equally impressive record-keeping system. In a few minutes he can produce the full family history of any bird on the farm.

Much of the grain used to feed breeding and broiler flocks comes

(Continued on page 10)



Before broiler industry became major business in Georgia there were few feed mills in State. They are now common sight, and each year produce many tons of chicken feed.



These broiler chickens being loaded into bus are assured of comfortable trip to farms. Bus has especially built ventilating, heating equipment.



Selective breeding practices have figured prominently in development of meat-type birds. Shown here are crossbred chickens at nine weeks.

from areas outside the State. It is moved by river barges from the Midwest down the Mississippi to Memphis, or over the Tennessee River to such inland ports as Chattanooga, Tenn., and Guntersville, Ala. From these terminals, the grain goes to mills where it is converted into broiler feed.

The paper industry supplies thousands of cartons each year to the hatcheries, which use the cartons in transporting broiler-chicks to the farms. And, any estimate of the quantity of wood used in manufacturing shipping crates for iced poultry would be staggering.

Modern transportation—particularly the refrigerated truck—has made it possible to move Georgia poultry rapidly to distant markets.

All these production and marketing facilities have worked together to make Georgia the leading broiler-producing State in the Nation. In 1958, it grew 292,119,000 broilers or about 20 percent of the national total. Gross income from Georgia birds that year ran close to \$164,531,000.

Also doing a big business in broilers are Arkansas, Alabama, and North Carolina. The Delmarva Peninsula, which includes Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, is another top-volume producing area.

Although the past year was a "rough one" for the broiler industry and economists aren't too optimistic about broiler prices during the first half of 1960—many Georgia producers figure they can make the necessary adjustments.

One of the founders of the Georgia broiler industry, who operates a closely integrated \$13 million broiler production, processing, and marketing enterprise, recently had this to say:

"We need to specialize. Our industry has relied too greatly upon a perishable product. Most of the industry is still dependent for its main source of income upon ice-poultry accounts, and this doesn't put us in the best selling position even though we produce a quality product."

He believes that through research, specialization, and improved

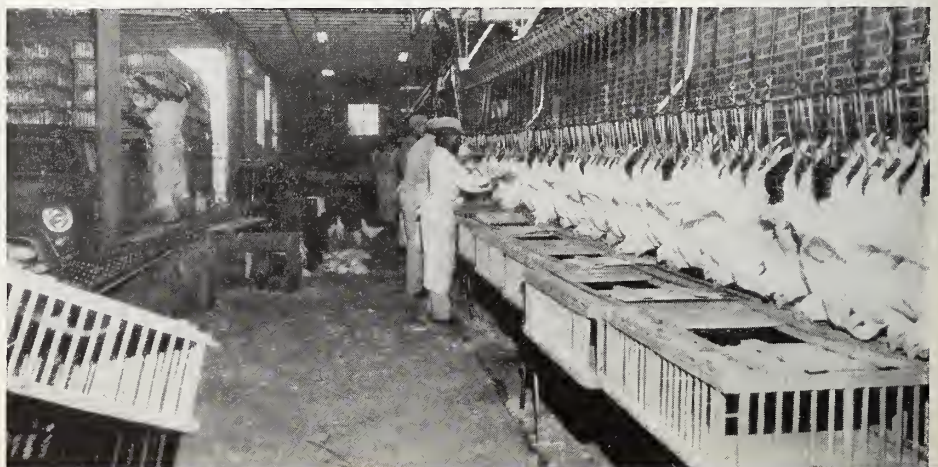
marketing, Georgia producers can develop new poultry products that will appeal to consumers and have longer sales and shelf life in the food markets. "This," he emphasizes, "will not only strengthen our marketing position but greatly expand our market here and abroad."

At one time, this processor's output was almost exclusively ice-packed poultry. He now processes 20 percent precooked poultry, 10 percent ice-packed, and 70 percent frozen. Within a few years, he expects precooked poultry to account for 40 to 50 percent of his output and frozen products, the rest.

Whether other Georgia processors follow this trend toward specialization cannot be predicted at this time. But one thing is certain. The Georgia broiler industry is not going to stand still. Industry leaders constantly seek new markets for their product and greater efficiency in its production.

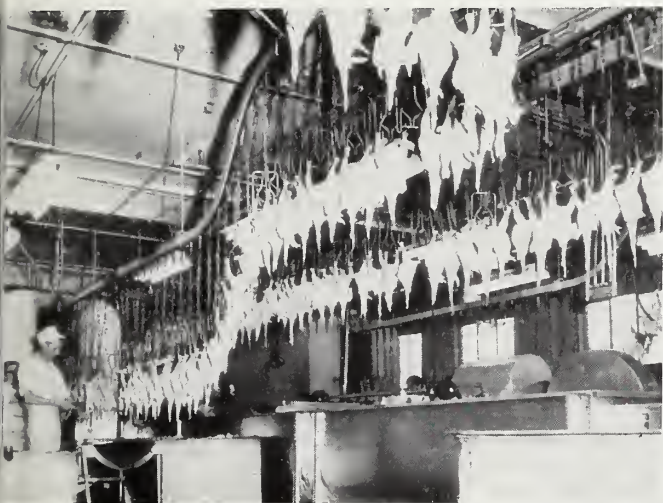
In this way they hope to maintain Georgia's title as the Nation's No. 1 broiler-producing State for many years to come.

Upon arriving at processing plant, live broilers are quickly removed from crates and fastened to overhead conveyor ready for slaughter.





Georgia boasts one of the largest, most modern processing plants in the country. Broilers are expertly dressed and drawn as they move along overhead line.



Plant's 800-foot straight production line moves the birds through various stages of processing. Workers kill, eviscerate, and pack 6,000 broilers an hour.



Cartoned and frozen, poultry parts are moved into zero storage warehouse. Mechanical forklifts save labor, time in storing products within warehouse.



For frozen poultry parts, birds are skillfully cut for packaging. Labeled cartons, photo top right, go into blast freezer department with temperature of -40°F .



Precooked poultry products are on the upswing in Georgia. Here, precooked chicken passes through the brooding machine at poultry processing plant.

MARKET NEWS FOR LIVESTOCK

MARKETINGS IN THE SOUTHEAST

by Roy Rockenbach

SOUTHEASTERN States in recent years have turned increasingly to the production of livestock. As a result, the number of local livestock auction markets in the area has expanded rapidly, along with the need for market news on these auction sales.

Working with State governments and departments of agriculture, the Livestock Division's Market News Branch of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has been expanding coverage of auction markets in this area.

Today, reasonably comprehensive coverage has been obtained in Alabama and Florida, and rapid progress toward this goal is underway in Kentucky and Georgia. Producer organizations in half a dozen other States have expressed interest in receiving market news on auction market sales in their areas.

To decide where and when to market his livestock, the producer needs to know about livestock supplies and movement and what prices are being paid at terminal markets, at nearby auction markets, and in direct sales—those at farms, feedlots, and buying stations—in his area. Those engaged in marketing or trading livestock need this information, too, in conducting their business.

For more than 40 years, the USDA has been gathering and disseminating livestock market news. In the beginning, it was chiefly the big terminal markets that were covered, for this was where most of the trading was going on. As the trend toward auction market and direct sales developed, market news was extended, where possible, to

cover these outlets, too.

Reporting direct and auction sales requires more travel, telephoning, and time than covering terminal market transactions. Nevertheless, though differing techniques of collecting information must be employed to report these various outlets, the market news service must be accurate, timely, and complete.

A reporter must have a thorough knowledge of livestock marketing and must know and be able to apply U.S. standards for grades of livestock. He must make all his reports on the basis of these grades.

Because of this, and the use of uniform terminology by all USDA livestock reporters, reports from any market can be readily understood anywhere in the country and compared with those from any other market.

Auction market reporting is complicated because of the large number of auctions, the relatively small volume of livestock handled at most of them, and because they usually operate only one day a week. The reporter usually must observe each sale on auction day in order to report the transaction accurately as to weight, grade, and price.

The problem of getting adequate coverage of auction markets in the

Southeast has been tackled jointly by the Federal and State governments. The program which has been worked out—and seems to be operating efficiently—employs a team of State reporters working with and under the technical supervision of a Federal market reporter.

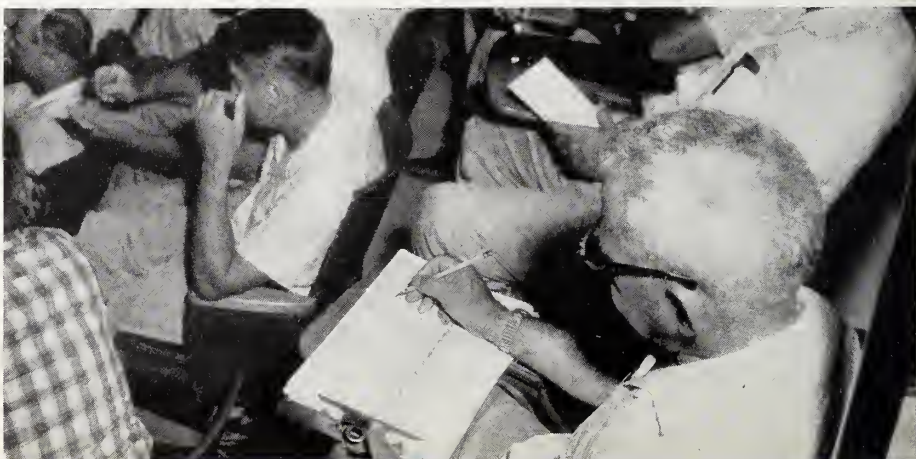
In Alabama, for instance, a Federal supervisory reporter is stationed at Montgomery and six State reporters cover a total of 30 auction sales in that State each week. An almost identical arrangement is working well in Florida.

Kentucky undertook a similar program in 1958 and is considering expanding it in the near future. In January 1960, a new Federal-State auction reporting program was also inaugurated in Georgia. This will cover all areas of the State when fully developed.

In these programs, the Federal reporter assists State officials in selecting and training State reporters and provides the necessary supervision to maintain uniformity in reporting. The Federal reporter also works with the State people in planning and maintaining the Federal-State reporting program.

State reporters are encouraged to prepare reports for immediate release to local newspapers and radio and television stations. They also forward their information to the Federal reporter who evaluates and summarizes it for dissemination throughout the State and adjoining areas and for release over the AMS leased teletype wire which interconnects all of the USDA market news offices.

To get accurate price, weight, and grade information at auction markets, reporters sit in on each sale.



The author is Eastern Area Supervisor of the Livestock Market News Branch, AMS.

Promotion of Farm Products by Agricultural Groups

by Robert E. Frye and Violet D. Grubbs

AGRICULTURAL groups in the United States spent \$67 million for the promotion of farm products during 1958, according to an AMS marketing research report.

Most of this money came from producers organized in their own groups or jointly with processors or shippers or as members of marketing cooperatives. Producers paid out \$52 million for advertising, merchandising, consumer education, and other forms of promotion in 1958.

Processors spent \$10 million; shippers contributed \$1.4 million; and State appropriations totaled nearly \$1 million.

About \$2 million came from unidentified sources.

The AMS study which uncovered this information also reports on several other interesting aspects of agricultural promotion work. It shows how the money for promotional activities is obtained; what types of promotion are used; and what commodities receive the most attention.

The report, "Promotion of Farm Products by Agricultural Groups," MRR-380, discusses these points in detail and provides 13 easy-to-read tables for comparisons.

A quick look at the study imme-

diately points up the fact that advertising is by far the most popular type of promotional activity used by these agricultural groups.

More than \$34.6 million was spent on advertising farm foods and fibers in 1958. Public relations and consumer education activities accounted for \$15 million, and merchandising aids (point-of-sale materials and dealer services) took \$11 million. Other activities, largely unidentified, accounted for the remaining \$5.3 million.

Farmer cooperatives allocated 65 percent of their promotional budgets for paid advertising. About half of the combined expenditures of commissions, boards, and councils was devoted to advertising.

Voluntary promotional groups gave advertising and public relations-consumer education programs each 41 percent of their moneys.

About half of the money spent on the various types of promotions financed nationwide programs. A third of the funds was used locally and within the State, and the remainder, regionally.

More money was spent by these groups in promoting commodities than branded products. About 57 percent of the money spent went for programs that followed a strictly commodity approach. Voluntary trade associations were most active in this type of promotion.

Only 21 percent of the promotion by agricultural groups was for branded products. As would be expected, cooperatives did most of this even though they only spent 54 percent of their total promotional expenditures for this purpose.

The other 22 percent was spent for commodities identified with an area of production: for example, "Maine potatoes," "Idaho potatoes," etc.


Dairy and fruit products received the most attention. These two commodity groups together accounted for \$45 million of the \$67 million spent by these groups in promoting farm products in 1958.

Well below, yet next in line, were natural fiber products, which had \$3.5 million spent on them, and meat and livestock products with a total of \$3.3 million. Vegetables and poultry and eggs trailed with slightly under \$2.5 million apiece, and a variety of other products received lesser amounts.

For 1959, even larger expenditures were budgeted for the promotion of farm foods and fibers. Producer-processor groups at the time of the survey expected to pay out \$72 million for promotion—9 percent more than they had a year earlier.

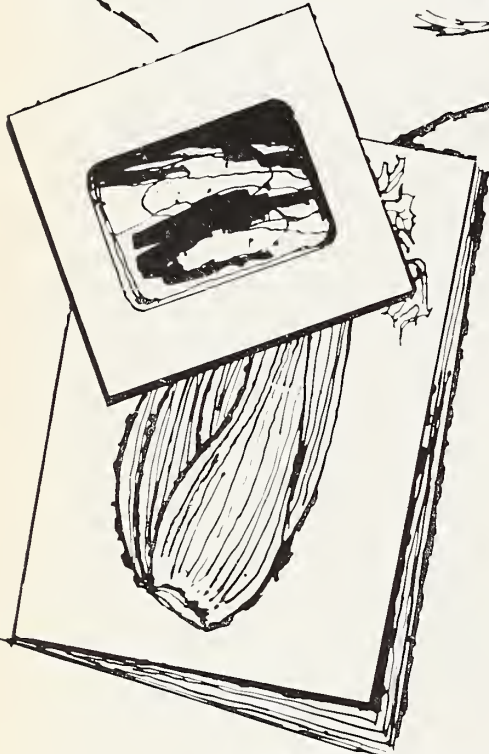
Several groups who had not directly allocated funds for promotional activities in 1958 set aside some \$900,000 for this purpose in 1959.

At the time of this research, the authors were staff members of the Market Development Research Division of AMS. Mrs. Grubbs has since left the Department.



VISUAL AIDS IN GRADING

by Wendell W. Morrison



FITTING square pegs into round holes is easy compared with the job of trying to fit fresh fruits and vegetables into proper grade categories. With square pegs, the corners are the only problem. When it comes to fruits and vegetables, although the majority may be normal, some specimens show knobs, crooks, growth-cracks, and other weird shapes that only Nature can dream up.

There also are variations in color, size, and maturity plus possible injuries from weather, disease, insects, and handling—all of which complicate the grader's job.

Yet, if the produce industry is to have a common language for making contracts, all fruits and vegetables must be fitted into, or excluded from, grade specifications.

Standardization technicians in the Fruit and Vegetable Division of AMS have set up grade standards for everything from apples to zucchini squash.

Their job is to define a U.S. No. 1 potato so that an inspector in

Boise, Idaho, will interpret the description in exactly the same way as an inspector in Caribou, Maine.

Often words aren't enough. Standards for the U.S. Fancy grade for potatoes specify that they be "well shaped," while U.S. No. 1 grade requires "fairly well shaped" potatoes. Here, there is a real problem of definition.

Working on the premise that a picture is worth a thousand words, the Fruit and Vegetable Division has added its own observation that a model is often worth even more. Color slides, models, line drawings, photographs, and color comparison guides are all used in standardizing interpretations.

These visual aids are used by the inspectors of the Federal and Federal-State inspection services. These men examine lots of produce and assign the proper grade or grades.

Uniform interpretation is vital—in fact, the whole basis of the inspection service. The standards have to mean the same thing in all parts of the country, or they aren't standards.

The author is a marketing specialist in the Fresh Products Standardization and Inspection Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS.



Perfecting on accurate reproduction of the color of the interior of a watermelon took two seasons of work.



Slides, models, drawings, photographs, and color guides are used in standardizing interpretations.

In grading fruits and vegetables that obviously fall into one grade or another, there is no problem. But, to determine borderline cases, the inspector needs the help of visual aids.

Of the aids now being used, photographs and color slides are the quickest to duplicate and the cheapest to make. They are used wherever possible. AMS has thousands of slides illustrating problem areas.

But photography, too, has its limitations. For one thing, color is hard to reproduce on film. In certain cases it is best to use other techniques for establishing color designations.

For example, the red color of tomatoes and the blush of a peach are hand painted on models or plastic color guides. The interior of a watermelon is reproduced on sheets of transparent plastic.

The color standards for watermelon flesh took two full seasons to prepare. AMS technicians first had to find a watermelon with flesh of just the right color—no easy job in itself. Then, a cut of the melon had to be copied by a skilled artist,

and painted reproductions sent to the field for color comparisons with mature melons of minimum U.S. No. 1 grade.

For other fruits and vegetables models provide the only practical means of explaining the standards. They present a three-dimensional view which shows the overall shape of a potato, pear, or apple, and illustrates the "texture" of citrus fruits.

Models have been standard equipment in inspection offices for years, and new ones are constantly being developed to meet new problems.

Quite recently an inspector in Chicago found a shipment of Bartlett pears that had a strange "pebbled" appearance, as though small round stones were imbedded under the skin.

Although he scored the pebbling according to his interpretation of the appearance factor in the standards, he sent several of the pears to Washington, D. C., for further clarification of this type of defect.

The Washington office agreed with his grading. Then, because

(Continued on page 16)



In AMS lab, real apple is compared with model.

The Changing Market

Special Milk Program

The number of schools, child-care institutions, and summer camps participating in the Special Milk Program rose to an all-time high of 81,500 in 1959, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. This represents an increase of more than 5,000 organizations in the past year.

During fiscal 1959, which ended June 30, a total of 2.2 billion half-pints of milk was used in addition to milk served with school lunches.

Preliminary reports indicate that the program has continued to expand this school year.

Since its inauguration in 1954, the Special Milk Program has brought about a steady increase in milk consumption by children and, in this way, has expanded the market for milk.

The success of the program has twice led Congress to extend and expand its annual appropriations.

March Is Egg Month

March will not only usher in the first day of spring, but National Egg Month as well. And the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service is again cooperating with the poultry and egg industry in urging increased consumption of this popular food.

Egg production is expected to increase until around April 1, and the quality of eggs during March

will be at peak levels. Meanwhile, mid-January cold storage holdings of eggs were considerably larger than a year earlier.

AMS reports that eggs, a long-time popular item on the breakfast table, are receiving sharp competition from other branded and widely advertised breakfast foods. Also, the American breakfast itself appears to have suffered somewhat of a setback in the general trend toward calorie counting. This has resulted in a downtrend in national consumption of eggs per person over the past several years.

Marketing men across the country are urged to promote the use of eggs in spring menus. Eggs will not only be plentiful, but easy on the family food budget.

Farm Products by Seaway

Agricultural Marketing Service transportation economists estimate that some 110 million bushels of grain moved overseas in 1959 via the newly improved St. Lawrence Seaway.

Navy beans from Michigan went to Israel and other foreign countries, and flour from Duluth-Superior, Milwaukee, and Buffalo to such far away places as Ceylon and Jordan. Frozen meat originating at interior western markets moved from Chicago to Europe. Liquid lard, in bulk, sailed from Chicago to Liverpool. Cornmeal, hides, malt grain, dairy products, and feed also were exported.

Retail Produce Manuals

The Agricultural Marketing Service, together with the Federal Extension Service, has released three how-to-do-it manuals on handling produce at retail stores.

The bulletins present step-by-step instructions that will help retailers save time and money in produce handling and enable them to offer consumers produce of better quality with less loss from waste and spoilage.

The first three bulletins cover work area organization, ordering, receiving, storing, and trimming. Other aspects of handling retail produce will be covered in succeeding bulletins.

Copies may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office.

Visual Aids in Grading

(Continued from page 15)

other inspectors might also run across "pebbled" pears, they made plaster reproductions of two of them. These were handpainted and sent for comments to supervisors in other inspection offices where pears are frequently inspected.

These men agreed upon the proper grade designation for the models, and duplicates were sent to the various field offices for future reference. In this way, another grade specification was precisely illustrated. The "square" pear now had its own niche in the AMS grade classification scheme.